

AmeriCorps is Getting Things Done on Veterans Day

Veterans Day is a time to honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good. While many plan to observe the national holiday with the day off, members of Washington's Vet Corps will host a series of events to honor those who serve our country.

"There are so many ways to make a difference, honor and improve the lives of veterans and support military families," said Mark Fischer, program manager for the Veterans Conservation Corps and Vet Corps programs. *"Some are large and many are small, but all important."*

A sampling of the activities coordinated by Vet Corps members during the preceding week and culminating on Veterans Day are noted below:

- The Veterans Conservation Corps, Sierra Club, Warrior Gateway, and Service Nation will collaborate for the second annual veterans day project at Hamm Creek Estuary located in Seattle. Over the past two decades, Hamm Creek has been transformed into a more natural setting while serving as a focal point in veterans' healing and transition. Today, Hamm Creek is home to several species of wildlife including beaver, bald eagle, osprey, and salmon. Hamm Creek Estuary embodies the struggles veterans face in their transition into civilian life and the promise of a better tomorrow through hard work, perseverance, and teamwork.
- Vet Corps member Michael Farnum will be the featured speaker at the Veterans Day Observance hosted by Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma. The event will take place in Lagerquist Hall starting at 12 noon. Michael served 23 years in the U.S. Army and is a decorated combat veteran earning 35 medals and 45 awards. Through his AmeriCorps national service assignment, Farnum helps veterans transition from the military to academia and then into the civilian workforce.
- "From Boots to Books: A Transition Workshop for Veterans" will be offered at Eastern Washington University in Cheney to help student veterans understand and manage the challenges that are commonly experienced with transitioning to college life. Co-sponsored by the Veterans Administration (VA) Medical Center in Spokane, representatives will be available to assist with various VA benefits and services including: health care, disability claims, home loans, family programs, etc.

In 2009, the Washington Commission for National and Community Service partnered with the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs to launch the first Vet Corps program in the nation to engage veterans in AmeriCorps national service positions. Veterans' mission continues through their civilian national service experience which enables them to make a positive difference in communities across Washington state while aiding their reintegration back into the community following their military service.

For information on the Vet Corps visit http://www.dva.wa.gov/vet_conservation_corps.html or for specific details on the events during the week leading up to and including Veterans Day, contact Mark Fischer at (360) 725-2224 or George Cavallo at (360) 808-2774.

AmeriCorps is a national service program that engages Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service to meet critical needs. Administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service, AmeriCorps engages 80,000 people each year in intensive, results-driven service through more than 14,000 nonprofits across the country. Since 1994, more than 700,000 Americans have provided more than 860 million hours of service to their communities and country through AmeriCorps. Interested individuals can learn about available service opportunities and apply online by visiting <http://www.ofm.wa.gov/servewa/> or AmeriCorps.gov.

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